

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (New) A method of reinforcing a hollow section having a closed periphery, an opening being produced at its periphery, after which a reinforcing component introduced into the hollow section interior is joined to the hollow section wall opposite the opening, comprising:

cutting a wall piece, forming the reinforcing component, of the hollow section out at the location of the opening to be produced except for a peripheral region,

bending the wall piece hanging in one piece on the opening edge into the hollow section, with the opening being formed, the length of the wall piece being dimensioned relative to the width of the hollow section in such way that the wall piece, with its free end, at least comes into contact with the opposite hollow section wall, and

joining the free end to the hollow section wall.

14. (New) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the wall piece is oversize with regard to its length relative to the width of the hollow section, wherein the projecting wall strip is bent over inside the hollow section by means of a punch plunging into the opening and is brought to bear against the hollow section wall in such a way as to conform to the contour, and wherein the wall strip is joined to said hollow section wall.

15. (New) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein joining is effected by press joining.

16. (New) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein joining is effected by welding.

17. (New) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the hollow section is formed by internal high pressure, and wherein, following forming in the internal high pressure tool, the opening is formed at existing internal high pressure, the wall piece is bent into the hollow section, and the wall strip is bent over and press-joined to the opposite hollow section wall.

18. (New) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein joining is effected by welding.

19. (New) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein joining is effected by welding.

20. (New) A device for reinforcing a hollow section having a closed periphery, comprising:

a tool for forming an opening at the periphery of the hollow section,

a means for inserting a reinforcing component into the interior of the hollow section, and

a joining device for connecting the reinforcing component to the hollow section wall opposite the opening,

wherein the tool for forming the opening is a perforating punch, on the end face of which a cutting edge is formed around part of the periphery, the rest of the periphery of the end face of the punch having a bending contour, by means of which a wall piece cut out by the cutting edge except for a peripheral region and forming the reinforcing component can be bent into the hollow section interior, during the plunging of said punch, until the free end of the wall piece bears against the hollow section wall, and

wherein a joining device is provided, by means of which the free end can be joined to the hollow section wall.

21. (New) The device as claimed in claim 6, wherein, after the free end of the wall piece comes into contact with the hollow section wall, a wall strip, containing the free end, of the wall piece can be bent over by means of the perforating punch and brought to bear against the hollow section wall in such a way as to conform to the contour, this wall strip being formed by an oversize of the wall piece with regard to its length relative to the width of the hollow section, and wherein the perforating punch, at the end face, has a cutout which starts from the bending contour and in which the wall strip is accommodated when being bent over and when being brought to bear.

22. (New) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the joining device is a welding device.

23. (New) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the joining device is a press-joining device, by means of which the wall strip bearing against the hollow section wall can be fastened to the latter.

24. (New) The device as claimed in claim 23, wherein the press-joining device contains a joining punch which is movably guided in a passage of the perforating punch, said passage opening out at the cutout at the end face, and wherein the press-joining device contains a die which is formed with a recess and bears against the outside of the hollow section, the recess having undercut contours and being in alignment with the passage of the joining punch.

25. (New) The device as claimed in claim 20, wherein the perforating punch is integrated in an internal high pressure forming tool, in the impression of which the hollow section is accommodated.

26. (New) The device as claimed in claim 25, wherein the press-joining device is integrated in the internal high pressure forming tool.

27. (New) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the perforating punch is integrated in an internal high pressure forming tool, in the impression of which the hollow section is accommodated.

28. (New) The device as claimed in claim 27, wherein the press-joining device is integrated in the internal high pressure forming tool.

29. (New) The device as claimed in claim 22, wherein the perforating punch is integrated in an internal high pressure forming tool, in the impression of which the hollow section is accommodated.

30. (New) The device as claimed in claim 29, wherein the press-joining device is integrated in the internal high pressure forming tool.

31. (New) The device as claimed in claim 23, wherein the perforating punch is integrated in an internal high pressure forming tool, in the impression of which the hollow section is accommodated.

32. (New) The device as claimed in claim 31, wherein the press-joining device is integrated in the internal high pressure forming tool.